

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)

Black Moss Farm – Replacement Agricultural Building

Location: Black Moss Farm, Ribble Valley, Lancashire

Designation: Forest of Bowland National Landscape

1. Introduction

This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been prepared in support of a retrospective planning application for the replacement of an existing agricultural building at Black Moss Farm. The assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA3), published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013).

The LVIA considers the effects of the development on landscape character and visual amenity, with particular regard to the site's location within the nationally designated Forest of Bowland National Landscape. The assessment is not carried out for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) purposes and therefore does not conclude on "significance" in EIA terms.

2. Site Context

The application site is located within the operational curtilage of Black Moss Farm, a working dairy farm situated approximately 2.2km north of Longridge and 3.2km south-west of Chipping. The site lies within a rural landscape characterised by undulating agricultural land, a patchwork of fields, traditional hedgerows, and scattered farmsteads.

The farmstead comprises a mix of traditional stone and modern agricultural buildings. The replacement building sits in the centre of the farm complex, largely screened by existing structures and field boundaries.

The Forest of Bowland National Landscape is designated for its scenic beauty, natural heritage, and historic farming character, and the site lies within the "Undulating Lowland Farmland" Landscape Character Area (LCA), as identified in Lancashire County Council's Landscape Strategy.

3. Description of Development

The development consists of a replacement agricultural building intended for the housing of livestock. The previous building had become structurally unsafe due to steel corrosion and asbestos-based materials.

- **New Building Dimensions:** 41.93m x 28.27m (1,185.33m²)
- **Ridge Height:** 7.60m (reduced from 8.50m)

- **External Materials:** Fibre cement roof sheets (with translucent heat guard panels), metal sheet wall cladding, Galebreaker ventilation curtain
 - **Position:** Central to the existing built form of the farmstead
 - **Visual Form:** Sympathetic to the rural context and typical of modern agricultural structures
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4. Landscape Baseline

The surrounding landscape is of moderate sensitivity, due to its designation and the intrinsic rural qualities it possesses. However, it is also a working landscape, where agricultural development forms an accepted and longstanding characteristic.

The site itself is visually associated with the wider farm complex and is not visually prominent in longer-range views. Field boundaries, mature vegetation, and existing built form contribute to visual containment.

5. Landscape Effects

The replacement building is of a scale, massing, and form that closely aligns with the previous structure. Although the footprint is marginally larger, the building's lower ridge height and updated material palette contribute to a modest, integrated visual profile.

Key landscape effects:

- **Character:** No adverse change to the landscape character; the development maintains the working agricultural identity of the site.
- **Materials and Form:** The use of fibre cement roofing and subdued metal cladding harmonises with the surrounding built form.
- **Vegetation and Landform:** No alteration to landform or loss of landscape features occurred.

Conclusion on Landscape Effects:

The development maintains the rural character and appearance of the site. Given the minimal physical and perceptual change to the landscape, the effect is considered **negligible to low** and **not adverse**.

6. Visual Effects

Visual receptors include:

- **Users of nearby public footpaths** (limited intermittent views through field boundaries)
- **Nearby farm workers and residents**

- **Recreational road users on minor rural lanes**

Given the building's central location within the farm complex, visual containment by adjacent buildings and topography is strong. Public visibility is low, with no significant open viewpoints toward the new structure.

Conclusion on Visual Effects:

There is no significant visual intrusion or disruption to views. The building appears as part of the existing farm complex. The overall visual effect is **low** and **not harmful**.

7. Cumulative and Residual Effects

There are no other proposed or recently completed developments in the immediate vicinity that would result in cumulative landscape or visual effects. The residual visual and landscape impact remains low.

8. Conclusion

The replacement agricultural building at Black Moss Farm has been designed and sited in a manner that is respectful of its rural setting and its location within the Forest of Bowland National Landscape.

The building preserves the visual coherence of the farmstead, does not intrude upon open countryside or long-distance views, and replaces a structure that had become visually and functionally detrimental.

In landscape and visual terms, the development is appropriate, well-contained, and results in no harm to the character, quality, or visual amenity of the National Landscape. It is therefore considered compliant with the relevant provisions of the NPPF and local planning policy, including Core Strategy Policy EN2.